

DEFAZIO; the sponsor of the bill, the ranking member of the committee, SAM GRAVES; as well as Aviation Ranking Member RICK LARSEN of Washington State.

Madam Speaker, we need to be able to have the authority to make incentive payments. We have seen an extraordinary shift in aviation travel. In April of last year, there was a 95 percent reduction in airline passengers. We recently saw TSA screen the same number of passengers as before the pandemic.

The aviation demand is coming back with a vengeance. Our airports are crowded. Our airlines are packed. Our airplanes are packed.

What this allows the FAA to do is to provide incentive payments to expedite the completion of construction projects at airports. This is for safety. This is for additional capacity. This is going to ensure that the aviation industry, that our airport infrastructure can keep up with increased demand.

And as the ranking member said, this same expedited authority and incentive payments is allowed in other forms of infrastructure. So I want to thank the ranking member, SAM GRAVES, for bringing up this common-sense legislation.

Madam Speaker, I urge its adoption.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, this is common-sense legislation. It doesn't cost the government any money. And the fact of the matter is, it is already being done in so many other areas of transportation projects.

Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 468.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE COORDINATION ACT

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2016) to amend the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 to develop a study regarding streamlining and consolidating information collection and preliminary damage assessments, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2016

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Federal Disaster Assistance Coordination Act”.

SEC. 2. STUDY TO STREAMLINE AND CONSOLIDATE INFORMATION COLLECTION AND PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1223 of the Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-254) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 1223. STUDY TO STREAMLINE AND CONSOLIDATE INFORMATION COLLECTION AND PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS.

“(a) INFORMATION COLLECTION.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator, in coordination with the Small Business Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Disaster Assistance Working Group of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and other appropriate agencies, shall—

“(1) conduct a study and develop a plan, consistent with law, under which the collection of information from disaster assistance applicants and grantees will be modified, streamlined, expedited, efficient, flexible, consolidated, and simplified to be less burdensome, duplicative, and time consuming for applicants and grantees; and

“(2) develop a plan for the regular collection and reporting of information on Federal disaster assistance awarded, including the establishment and maintenance of a website for presenting the information to the public.

“(b) PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator, in consultation with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, shall convene a working group on a regular basis with the Secretary of Labor, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Secretary of Transportation, the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, and other appropriate agencies as the Administrator considers necessary, to—

“(1) identify and describe the potential areas of duplication or fragmentation in preliminary damage assessments after disaster declarations;

“(2) determine the applicability of having one Federal agency make the assessments for all agencies; and

“(3) identify potential emerging technologies, such as unmanned aircraft systems, consistent with the requirements established in the FEMA Accountability, Modernization and Transparency Act of 2017 (42 U.S.C. 5121 note), to expedite the administration of preliminary damage assessments.

“(c) COMPREHENSIVE REPORT.—The Administrator shall submit one comprehensive report that comprises the plans developed under subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) and a report of the findings of the working group convened under subsection (b), which may include recommendations, to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

“(d) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The comprehensive report developed under subsection (c) shall be made available to the public and posted on the website of the Federal Emergency Management Agency—

“(1) in pre-compressed, easily downloadable versions that are made available in all appropriate formats; and

“(2) in machine-readable format, if applicable.

“(e) SOURCES OF INFORMATION.—In preparing the comprehensive report, any publi-

cation, database, or web-based resource, and any information compiled by any government agency, nongovernmental organization, or other entity that is made available may be used.

“(f) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after submission of the comprehensive report, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or a designee, and a member of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, or a designee, shall brief, upon request, the appropriate congressional committees on the findings and any recommendations made in the comprehensive report.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating to section 1223 in the table of contents of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-254) is amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 1223. Study to streamline and consolidate information collection and preliminary damage assessments.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2016.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 2016, the Federal Disaster Assistance Coordination Act, introduced by Representatives GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN and PETERS. This legislation amends the Disaster Recovery Reform Act to help Federal agencies streamline and consolidate information collection and preliminary damage assessments following disasters.

When a major disaster occurs, Americans don't have time to wait for bureaucracy. Today, however, too many barriers stand between emergency response and Americans in crisis due to disaster.

Federal recovery assistance following major disasters is currently hampered by inefficient information collection and assessments conducted by multiple agencies.

This bill will remove information collection barriers that currently impede disaster aid. It creates a working group to identify duplicative assessments and propose their elimination.

Further, it would streamline Federal disaster recovery efforts by concluding that a single agency is sufficient to conduct damage assessments to account for the needs of disaster victims in 2021.

It is 2021, and we can and should be doing this smarter. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I rise in support of this bill, H.R. 2016, the Federal Disaster Assistance Coordination Act.

First, I want to thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member GRAVES for bringing this bill to the floor, as well as Chairwoman NORTON. But I would also like to thank Representative SCOTT PETERS from California for cosponsoring this legislation.

In the last Congress, I joined with former colleague, MARK MEADOWS, in proposing this bill, and it was with great satisfaction that I see it come to the floor.

This is a simple bill that will establish a process to identify ways to streamline and consolidate the collection of certain disaster information in order to start the recovery process for individuals, families, and government devastated by natural disasters.

While FEMA is the lead Federal agency on disasters, there are multiple Federal agencies involved in every disaster response and recovery. This often leads to duplicative assessments and causes serious delays for the recovery process to begin.

In the aftermath of Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and the seismic activity in Puerto Rico, we discovered how Federal agency after Federal agency, from FEMA, to HUD, to SBA, would require the same information from applicants, location, nature of damage, ownership, value of damage, estimated repair costs, among many others, in each of their preliminary assessments.

There was no process to share this information between the Federal agencies, which ultimately caused significant delays during both immediate relief and long-term recovery. At one point, these represented more than 70,000 assessments of individual work-sites that each needed to be completed by FEMA. Many of these assessments will be small parts of a larger project; sites costing under \$126,000, with responsibilities divided among municipalities and State agencies. Many of these were each, itself, a part of a larger process.

For example, repairs to individual pipes, storage tanks or pumps of an aqueduct system; and having to evaluate each site individually will slow down the whole project.

After many complaints from us and the local governments, FEMA, finally, in 2020, decided to begin consolidating these assessments for Puerto Rico to speed up the project delivery process across multiple Federal agencies.

I think it is critically important that Federal response agencies work together to minimize overlaps in their assessments and take advantage of the newest technologies.

Specifically, this bill will establish a Federal working group led by FEMA that will work with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and in consultation with

HUD, SBA, HHS, EDA, the Department of Labor, and OMB to identify ways to reduce duplication and modernize the Federal damage assessments process.

This is a good government bill that will help expedite all forms of disaster recovery across the Nation. As we have learned in Puerto Rico, it is not a matter of if there is a next disaster; it is about when it is going to happen, at least in our case.

So we must be ready to respond in a way that takes care of the immediate needs of those facing a disaster and of rebuilding with resiliency. That response needs to be efficient and effective, and with this legislation, we are going to help bring this about.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Miss GONZALEZ-COLON. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. VAN DUYNE).

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my colleagues' bill, H.R. 2016, the Federal Disaster Assistance Coordination Act.

When I was Regional Secretary for HUD during Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Maria, and Hurricane Irma, I saw firsthand the bureaucratic web of red tape and inefficiencies that prevented getting help to those who needed it the most in a timely manner.

I spoke with several of you in this body on both sides of the aisle, who came to me fighting for your constituents, asking why it was taking so long to get aid. I felt and understood your frustration, but had to explain the long list of policies, procedures, and red tape that our regulations demanded. And, boy, I never felt like more of a bureaucrat than when I spoke with you.

It is a very difficult position for our folks to be in. These inefficiencies have serious costs.

This is a bipartisan piece of common-sense legislation to establish procedures to streamline and consolidate processes. When we allocate dollars, they need to get to those who are suffering the most. And the last thing we need is for them to be caught up in a bureaucracy of the government's making.

The faster FEMA is able to help get to communities of need, the faster they can recover. It is critically important that these agencies all work together.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

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Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Miss GONZALEZ-COLON. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES), my friend and the ranking member of the Aviation Subcommittee.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, you have heard numerous

speakers talk about the bureaucracy that happens in the aftermath of a disaster, and we had legislation by Ranking Member SAM GRAVES trying to help to cut through that bureaucracy and not have our own Federal Government revictimize our disaster victims, who are citizens of this country.

In the aftermath of a disaster—which, being from south Louisiana, we experience, unfortunately, way too frequently—we have FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, that comes in; we have the Small Business Administration that comes in; we have the Department of Housing and Urban Development; we have the Department of Agriculture; and others that all offer different types of emergency aid or programs.

Madam Speaker, apparently, it appears that many of these agencies aren't aware that there has been this invention called the internet that connects everybody. Instead of coming in and forcing these disaster victims, who potentially have lost everything that they own, to come in and stop by numerous locations and fill out the same paperwork over and over again, they should come in and apply commonsense solutions that we have seen in the private sector for decades now, simply coming in, providing information once, being more efficient, truly providing service to these disaster victims, instead of revictimizing them.

I want to thank the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico, my friend, for her leadership on this effort. I know, being from Puerto Rico and victimized by Hurricanes Irma, Maria, and others, this is an extraordinary issue for her constituents. I really do appreciate Congressman DEFAZIO, Ranking Member SAM GRAVES, and others who have partnered with her on this legislation, allowing it to go through. I urge adoption of this legislation.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST).

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, I want to first thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member GRAVES for bringing this important bipartisan legislation to the floor.

H.R. 2016 would begin the critical process in working to consolidate the overlapping disaster response programs that delay disaster assistance for citizens in Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN's district, as well as in my district.

Mississippi has withstood flooding, hurricanes, and tornadoes over the last 2 years, and many of these response efforts are still underway today. This is no fault of the Federal agencies that are tasked with responding, but it is, instead, the product of overlapping programs that result in duplicative assessments that delay the recovery process.

This bill would establish a Federal working group to help identify a more streamlined approach to helping Americans respond to natural disasters.

This commonsense approach to solving delays in Federal disaster response would help expedite recovery and give Americans confidence in the Federal response.

I appreciate Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN's leadership on this issue, and I ask my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I just want to say, in closing, that H.R. 2016 is a good-government, bipartisan piece of legislation that will help streamline and improve disaster recovery efforts.

It is not just Puerto Rico. It is not just the Caribbean. From the western part of the United States to even the territories, we are all affected by natural disasters.

I want to thank, again, Representative SCOTT PETERS from California for co-leading this legislation, as well as Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member GRAVES for recognizing the merits of this bill.

I urge support of H.R. 2016, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2016.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NOTICE TO AIRMEN IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2021

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1262) to establish a task force on improvements for certain notices to airmen, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1262

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Notice to Airmen Improvement Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. FAA TASK FORCE ON NOTAM IMPROVEMENT.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall establish a task force to be known as the FAA Task Force on NOTAM Improvement (in this section referred to as the "Task Force").

(b) **COMPOSITION.**—The Task Force shall consist of members appointed by the Admin-

istrator, including at least one member of each of the following:

- (1) Air carrier representatives.
- (2) Labor union representatives of airline pilots.
- (3) Labor union certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, to represent FAA air traffic control specialists assigned to the U.S. NOTAM Office.
- (4) Labor union certified under section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, to represent FAA aeronautical information specialists.
- (5) General and business aviation representatives.
- (6) Aviation safety experts with knowledge of NOTAMs.
- (7) Human factors experts.

(c) **DUTIES.**—The duties of the Task Force shall include—

- (1) reviewing existing methods for presenting NOTAMs and flight operations information to pilots;
- (2) reviewing regulations and policies relating to NOTAMs, including their content and presentation to pilots;
- (3) evaluating and determining best practices to organize, prioritize, and present flight operations information in a manner that optimizes pilot review and retention of relevant information; and
- (4) providing recommendations for—
 - (A) improving the presentation of NOTAM information in a manner that prioritizes or highlights the most important information, and optimizes pilot review and retention of relevant information;
 - (B) ways to ensure that NOTAMs are complete, accurate, and contain the proper information;
 - (C) any best practices that the FAA should consider to improve the accuracy and understandability of NOTAMs and the display of flight operations information; and
 - (D) ways to work with air carriers, other airspace users, and aviation service providers to implement solutions that are aligned with the recommendations under this paragraph.

(d) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the establishment of the Task Force, the Task Force shall submit to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report detailing—

- (1) the results of the reviews and evaluations of the Task Force under paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (c);
- (2) the best practices identified and recommendations provided by the Task Force under subsection (c)(4);
- (3) any recommendations of the Task Force for additional regulatory or policy actions to improve the presentation of NOTAMs; and
- (4) the degree to which implementing the recommendations of the Task Force described under paragraph (2) will address National Transportation Safety Board Safety Recommendation A-18-024.

(e) **APPLICABLE LAW.**—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Task Force.

(f) **SUNSET.**—The Task Force shall terminate on the later of—

- (1) the date on which the Task Force submits the report required under subsection (d); or
- (2) the date that is 18 months after the date on which the Task Force is established under subsection (a).

(g) **AUTHORITY.**—The Administrator shall have the authority to carry out the recommendations of the Task Force detailed in the report required under subsection (d).

(h) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **FAA.**—The term "FAA" means the Federal Aviation Administration.

(2) **NOTAM.**—The term "NOTAM" means notices to airmen required by international

or domestic regulation or law, as described in the order issued by the FAA on December 11, 2018, titled "Notices to Airmen (NOTAM)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1262, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia?

There was no objection.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 1262, the Notice to Airmen Improvement Act, introduced by Mr. STAUBER and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 1262 will create a task force to review existing methods for presenting notices to airmen. Notices to airmen provide pilots with essential and real-time information regarding abnormalities or issues in the National Airspace System. For example, notices to airmen alert pilots to potential hazards in the airspace or at an airport, such as a closed runway or taxiway. While pilots are required to review all notices to airmen before flight, there has been concern about the lengthiness and completeness of the critical information contained in notices to airmen and how the information is displayed to, and organized for, pilots.

Under H.R. 1262, the task force will determine best practices for organizing and presenting flight operations information to pilots in the most optimal manner and make recommendations to improve the presentation of notices to airmen while ensuring their accuracy and completeness.

Recommendations from the task force could help prevent future aviation accidents and near-accidents. We saw, in July 2017, an Air Canada A320 almost land on top of five jetliners, with more than a thousand people on board, awaiting takeoff at San Francisco International Airport, before executing a go-around. The aircraft came as close as 60 feet above one of the planes on the ground.

Thankfully, there were no injuries, but this could have been catastrophic. The National Transportation Safety Board determined the probable cause of the incident was the pilots' misidentification of the taxiway for a runway, based in part on their ineffective review of notices to airmen before flight.

Notices to airmen and airwomen can and must be better for pilots. I expect the task force established under H.R. 1262 will lead to recommendations that will improve aviation safety.